

Potawatomi Attend Festivities at Mishicot

by Michelle Spaude

"Welcome," smiled Jim Sustman, the president of the Mishicot Area Growth and Improvement Committee (MAGIC), as a group of community members from the Forest County Potawatomi entered the VFW Hall at Mishicot on Friday, October 20.



cultural opportunity for the kids who attended his language classes from the Wabeno and Crandon schools. So he invited these students who danced to attend. Wearing full regalia was required.

Youth dancers participating included: Presley Keeble, 8; Holly Spaude, 9;

Isabella Daniels, 3; Princess Tashena VanZile, 13; Brave Andrew Shepard, 11; and Ashley Franz, 15. Adult dancers were Alyce Daniels, Leslie Franz and Jeff Keeble.

Keeble also helped with drumming, along with Ian Wabanascum, Brian Franz and Billy Daniels Jr.

Daniels felt it was important for his group to accept the invitation to the festivities because there is historical significance with the Potawatomi



The Potawatomi float received first place.

Door County and the upper peninsula of Michigan. It is believed that Chief Mishicot moved to the latter and probably died in Hannibalville.

The Potawatomi meaning of Mishicot is "hairy leg of an owl." "The original spelling of Mishicot is Meshigaud," told Leppert. There are Meshigaud's who live in Hannibalville today.

Earl Meshigaud of Hannibalville was invited to the Pumpkin Fest two years ago. He and his wife attended the parade

Sustman would like to continue having a Native American connection involved with the Fall Fest each year.

Daniels is looking forward doing more things like this for the youth in the future.

Leppert stated that this outing was a historical moment and compared it to the year 1925 when approximately 30 Potawatomi were invited to attend the Kewaunee County Fair in Luxemburg, Wis. There is a huge group picture of this event hanging in the FCP Cultural Center





**Brian Franz
prepare the float
behind them.**

Billy Daniels Jr., FCP Language and Culture Director, was invited by Sustman to attend the 19th Annual Pumpkin Fest activities and represent the Potawatomi in its parade on Saturday. Daniels was also asked to provide drummers and dancers for a powwow demonstration afterwards on the Old School grounds.

Daniels thought this would be a good



Shown above are (l-r) Brian Franz, Billy Daniels Jr. and Vince Leppert who received the first place plaque for the Potawatomi float in the mail within a week after the festivities.

were also Potawatomi villages nearby in Tisch Mills, Black Earth (birthplace of Simon Kahquados), Kewaunee and Algoma. According to FCP Historical Researcher Vince Leppert, this whole area was ceded away by the Menominee in 1831.

This upset Chief Waumegesako (Mexico) who was the main leader of many of these Potawatomi villages. "Since there were so many Potawatomi who lived here, the chief complained at Chicago Treaty," stated Leppert.

After the Chicago Treaty in 1833, all Potawatomi were forced to move west. However, Chief Mishicot and others tried to stay there. A French fur trader named Andrew Vieux gave the Potawatomi three 40s so they could do just that.

In 1844 a white settler named Dan Smith put up a sawmill. Mishicot was officially founded in 1847 and was named after Smith's friend, Chief Mishicot. Smith did a lot of trading with him.

Unfortunately, in 1862 the Kewaunee County authorities kicked the Potawatomi out because they could not afford the taxes on the fee land. Many moved northwest and others to

villages in that area many years ago.

In addition to Mishicot, there



Despite the cold temperatures, there was a nice-sized crowd watching the drummers and dancers.

in full regalia holding a huge banner made by MAGIC honoring Mishicot's Potawatomi history.

This year MAGIC supplied the Potawatomi with a trailer and bales of hay with a banner on both sides stating "Our Potawatomi Friends." The Potawatomi float took first place for best historical, agricultural and Native American theme. MAGIC also treated the Potawatomi group to a complimentary fish fry the night they arrived. "It is a thrill to have you here," stated Sustman.

A couple years ago Sustman invited Leppert to speak about the native history of the area. "The townspeople really enjoyed hearing about the Native American history the town has. It was so popular that this year we took a bus full of Mishicot residents and traveled to the Hannahville powwow," Sustman excitedly told. "The powwow was enjoyed so much that we're planning it again for next year!"

and Museum today. Another large copy has been made and is hanging in the FCP Health and Wellness Center as well.



Inter-tribal time